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Spirits Whisper in Winds of Fire

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SPIRITS WHISPER IN WINDS OF FIRE

by

LISANA M. MACIAS RED BEAR

B.A., The Evergreen State College

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Art and Art History Department of
the University of Colorado in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the
degree of Master in Fine Arts

2004

University of Colorado at Boulder



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Red Bear, LisaNa M Macias (MFA., Interdisciplinary Media Art Practices
[Art and Art History Department]).

SPIRITS WHISPER IN WINDS OF FIRE

Thesis directed by Professors Kay Miller and Jim Johnson

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In every moment there is contradiction and the obligation to seek truth.

As a revolutionary artist in the twenty first century, what I now refer to as the apocalyptic era, I feel obligated to strategically utilize every opportunity to create pertinent compositions built upon my interaction and critical analysis of our contemporary global society. Presently, I am witnessing the destruction of Turtle Island and the world on many levels including; fascism masquerading as homeland security, neocolonialism, extinction of animal and plant species and global warming. It is *shocking* and incomprehensibly *awful* that within 40 years, as a womyn who remembers the civil rights movement, the farm laborers movement, the organizing of the Black Panthers and American Indian Movement, I would again see as an adult the blatant repression of peace and justice, the end of civil liberties and the crowning reign of the cowboy mentality. The newly selected Bush administration and its amplified military industrial complex will surely have a negative impact globally in the coming four years. Therefore as a visionary artist and activist I believe it is not an option to remain silent in the face of such chaos. My passion for and commitment to peace, love and justice is no subliminal message within my work it is as transparent as Uranium Womyn 238's saran wrap dress.

"Revolution is not only won by numbers, but by visionaries, and if artists aren't visionaries, then we have no business doing what we do."

Cherrie Moraga

My academic and studio practice focuses mainly on the historical and current conflict and unity of western and indigenous ideology. I am an interdisciplinary artist and single Mother of Mestiza ethnicity: Xicana Mexica, Apache, and Andalusian. Through my artwork I express the reality of diaspora and mi familia's intergenerational struggle toward transcending racism, poverty and oppression in our pursuit of self determination. At one time my ancestors danced their visions and dreams into being during ceremonial times when those with a vision would share their dreams, struggles and triumphs with their community. My intention is to claim the digital landscape as my neo-plaza. I recognize it is as a global arena and due to colonial displacement and marginalization I view myself as an uprooted indigenous planetary citizen. I realize this is a too common experience for a significant sect of the earth's children, with increased expansion there will always be the displaced, the untouchables, the disenfranchised. I work to empower and affirm the voice of our violently silenced and 'eradicated' position which embodies the international message of ongoing resistance to colonial definition of the indigenous self.

My background in the Mental Health field, with an emphasis in indigenous intergenerational psychology and the soul wound, supports my ongoing research on deconstructing the colonized mind, including empowerment work such as remedying internalized racism and oppression by presenting workshops on *Deconstructing Internalized Racism Through Media, Image and Sound*. With the composing of my dvd LA`LUCHA I realized a wellspring of possibilities for both visual and auditory vocalization. The palettes within the editing software enabled the generation and alteration of images with color, light, shadow, and movement. Creating in new media technology led me to consider; if certain frequencies attack the senses [example: to desensitize the visual manifestation of violence through repetition of violent imagery] what image and sound vibration awakens the heart and mind, revitalizes sentient balance, insight and compassion?

My installation "Spirits Whisper in Winds of Fire" creates a frequency

that addresses the forced acceptance of increased global militarism, neocolonialism and the excessive use and abuse of depleted uranium 236 / 238 and yellow cake. It seeks to unveil the constructions of the 'War on Terrorism' and the twenty first century environment of xenophobic hysteria leading to 6 mm vapor barriers in households as protection from potential biological terrorist attacks. I want to remind the reader and correct the mainstream reporting leading to the popular fallacy that the post 9 /11 anthrax threat was the first incident of biological warfare in this country. Given the discrepancy that this is indigenous land and the US Army Calvary distributed small pox to the first peoples of this land; I assert that it was this instance which actually set the precedence for biological warfare on this land, and it also exposes the 'terrorist' entity truly capable of such methods of extermination to secure the expansion of the United States.

My dvd narrative "*Uranium Womyn 238*" begins with the image of a turtle which symbolizes the 'Americas' pre-conquest Turtle Island [intertribal name for the entire western hemisphere, connotes Indigenous 'Indian' lands]. Uranium Womyn 238 carefully enters the scene walking on eggshells as she begins a dance of transformative reclamation. She wears a 3 prong slave collar, fabricated out of metal and Wal-Mart plastic bags tipped with ribbons and bells. Covering her ass are stars and stripes hot pants with red woven netting dripping down each leg representing the rape of the natural earth, women, children, men and elders. The use of these symbols signifies complex issues relating to my experience being bicultural while resisting assimilation and hegemony. Uranium Womyn 238 struggles and absorbs the negative figure head of that hegemony; a militarized and corporate commander who makes a profit from repression and war. It is reported the US population is exposed to equal amounts of radiation expelled in one 'dirty' bomb by living one year in America.

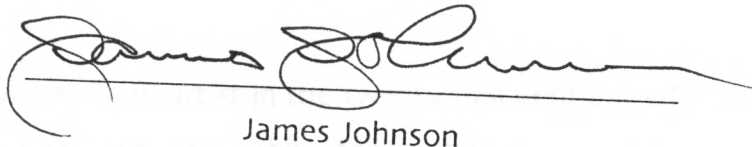
My intention is to activate a self and community dialogue within viewers, hopefully raising questions about their place or involvement in the narrative and installation setting.

In order to facilitate the reader having the opportunity to experience this installation frequency I have included a DVD of the entire exhibit including the dvds LA~LUCHA, and URANIUM WOMYN 238. I do imagine a life without war, a world built upon sustainability, dialogue, peace and dignity for all earths' creatures.

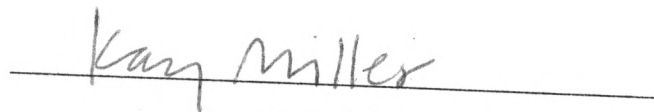
All my relations.

Now please remove and insert the DVD into your visual player.

This thesis entitled:
SPIRITS WHISPER IN WINDS OF FIRE
created by LisaNa M. Macias-Red Bear
has been approved for the Department of Art and Art History.



James Johnson



Kay Miller

Date 12.8.04

The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signatories, and we find that both the content and form meet acceptable presentation standards of scholarly work in the above mentioned discipline.

HRC protocol # _____